



JOB VACANCIES, AUSTRALIA, MAY 1984

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MAIN FEATURES

NOTE: *The results of the job vacancy surveys conducted since November 1983 are not strictly comparable with those of previous surveys. See paragraphs 2,3 and 4 below.*

Between February 1984 and May 1984 the estimated number of job vacancies in Australia decreased from 44,300 to 34,800. This decrease was mainly recorded in finance and business services.

There were approximately 7 vacancies per 1,000 jobs which is a fall of about 2 vacancies per 1,000 jobs over the last 3 months.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

1. This publication contains results of a new sample survey first introduced in November 1983. The survey, which is conducted by telephone, obtains information from employers on the number of job vacancies as at the third Friday of the middle month of the calendar quarter.
2. The new sample survey is based on the ABS register of businesses and replaces the survey based on a sample selected from lists of employers subject to payroll tax and lists of government organisations and hospitals.
3. Background information for the introduction of the new survey is provided in *Information Paper: New Statistical Series: Employment, Average Weekly Earnings, Job Vacancies and Overtime* (6256.0) issued on 21 June 1984.
4. Because of the substantially improved coverage of employers provided by the ABS register and a new and larger sample, results from the new survey are not comparable with previous surveys and no attempt has been made to revise the old series. Nevertheless, to provide a relationship between the old and new series, estimates for November 1983, obtained from the old and new surveys, are presented in this publication.

Scope of the survey

5. All vacancies (as defined in paragraph 8) for wage and salary earners are represented in the survey, except those:

- (a) in the Australian permanent defence forces;
- (b) in enterprises primarily engaged in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting;
- (c) in private households employing staff;
- (d) in overseas embassies, consulates etc.;
- (e) located outside Australia.

Survey design

6. A sample of approximately 4,300 employers is selected from the ABS register of businesses to ensure adequate State and industry representation. The sample is updated each quarter to take account of new businesses, those which have ceased operation and structural changes such as takeovers and mergers. The statistical unit for the survey comprises all activities of an enterprise in a particular State or Territory. Each statistical unit is classified to an industry which reflects the predominant activity of the enterprise in the State or Territory. In a small number of cases where an enterprise has significant employment in more than one industry, a separate statistical unit is created for each industry. The statistical units are stratified by State, industry and size of employment and a simple random sample selected from each stratum.

Definitions

7. *Reference Date* for the survey is the third Friday of the middle month of the quarter. For the most recent survey this was 18 May 1984.
8. A *job vacancy* is a job available for immediate filling on the survey date and for which recruitment action had been taken by the employer. Recruitment action includes efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by factory notices, by notifying government or private employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting,

interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or organisation. Excluded are jobs available only to existing employees of the organisation. In this context the Australian Public Service and the Public Services of the States and the Northern Territory are treated as 'organisations'. Also excluded are vacancies:

- (a) to be filled by persons already hired or by promotion or transfer of existing employees;
- (b) to be filled by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave or after industrial disputes;
- (c) not available for immediate filling on the survey date;
- (d) not available within the particular State or Territory to which the return relates;
- (e) for work carried out under contract;
- (f) for which no effort is being made to fill the position.

9. The *job vacancy rate* is calculated by expressing the number of job vacancies as a percentage of the number of employees plus vacancies.

Reliability of estimates

10. As the estimates in this publication are based on information relating to a sample of employers rather than a full enumeration, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from all employers. This difference, called *sampling error*, should not be confused with inaccuracy that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents or in processing by ABS; such inaccuracy is referred to as *non-sampling error* and may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or sample. Efforts have been made to reduce non-sampling error by careful design of questionnaires, detailed checking of returns and quality control of processing.

11. The sampling error associated with any estimate can be estimated from the sample results. One measure of sampling error is given by the *standard error* which indicates the degree to which an estimate may vary from the value that would have been obtained from a full enumeration (the 'true' figure). There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate differs from the true value by less than one standard error, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

12. If the standard error of an estimate is large relative to the size of the estimate, this detracts seriously from the usefulness of that estimate. The *relative standard error* (or SE%) is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate and provides an alternative expression for the accuracy of an estimate.

13. An example of the use of standard error for the job vacancy estimates is as follows. Table 1 shows the estimated number of job vacancies for Australia at 18 May 1984 as being 34,800, with a standard error of 3,300. Therefore there are about two chances in three that a full enumeration would have given a figure in the range 31,500 to 38,100 and about nineteen chances in twenty that it would be in the range 28,200 to 41,400.

Industry classification

14. Industry is classified according to the *Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) 1978 Edition, Volume 1—The Classification* (1201.0).

Seasonal factors

15. Job vacancy figures at different dates may be affected by seasonal influences. Publication of seasonally adjusted figures will not be possible until results of the surveys for several years are available.

Related publications

16. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request:

Information Paper: New Statistical Series: Employment, Average Weekly Earnings, Job Vacancies and Overtime (6256.0)

Overtime, Australia, (6330.0)—issued quarterly

Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, (6302.0)—issued quarterly

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0)—issued quarterly

17. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- nil or rounded to zero
- * subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes

18. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R.J. CAMERON
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. JOB VACANCIES AND JOB VACANCY RATES(a)

Survey Date	Number of vacancies ('000)			Job vacancy rate(a) (per cent)
	Manu- facturing	Other industries	Total	
1981—				
20 February	10.4	23.1	33.5	0.8
15 May	10.0	25.7	35.7	0.8
21 August	9.7	25.0	34.7	0.8
20 November	9.8	26.9	36.7	0.9
1982—				
19 February	9.3	24.4	33.7	0.8
21 May	4.9	20.4	25.3	0.6
20 August	3.7	17.8	21.5	0.5
19 November	1.8	14.6	16.4	0.4
1983—				
18 February	2.1	14.9	16.9	0.4
20 May	2.2	15.4	17.5	0.5
19 August	2.9	13.8	16.7	0.4
18 November—old(b)	2.9	16.2	19.1	0.5
—new(c)	5.4	24.7	30.1	0.6
1984—				
17 February	8.9	35.4	44.3	0.9
18 May	8.1	26.7	34.8	0.7
Standard error of estimates and of quarterly movements(d)	1.4	3.0	3.3	0.1

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 7 to 9. (b) Result from payroll tax based sample. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (c) Result of sample from ABS register. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (d) Applicable to latest estimates. See paragraphs 10 to 13.

TABLE 2. JOB VACANCIES (a) : INDUSTRY
('000)

Industry	18 Feb. 1983	20 May 1983	19 Aug. 1983	18 Nov. 1983		17 Feb. 1984	18 May 1984	Standard error (d)
				old(b)	new(c)			
Manufacturing(c)—								
Metal products, machinery and equipment	0.6	0.8	1.5	1.3	2.3	5.6	4.0	0.8
Other manufacturing	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.6	3.1	3.3	4.1	1.1
Total Manufacturing	2.1	2.2	2.9	2.9	5.4	8.9	8.1	1.4
Wholesale and retail trade	2.3	2.8	2.0	2.2	7.0	9.1	8.3	2.4
Transport and storage; communication	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.9	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.1
Public administration; community services	8.8	8.4	7.9	9.4	8.7	10.8	10.0	1.1
Other(e)	3.0	3.7	3.4	3.8	7.7	14.7	8.4	1.4
Total	16.9	17.5	16.7	19.1	30.1	44.3	34.8	3.3

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 7 to 9. (b) Result from payroll tax based sample. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (c) Result of sample from ABS register. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (d) Applicable to latest estimates of level and quarterly movements. See paragraphs 10 to 13. (e) Mining, Finance and Business Services, Recreation and Personal Services, Construction and Electricity, Gas and Water.

TABLE 3. JOB VACANCIES AND JOB VACANCY RATES (a), STATES AND TERRITORIES

Survey Date	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
JOB VACANCIES (' 000)									
<i>Manufacturing—</i>									
<i>1983—</i>									
18 February	(b)0.7	(b)1.0	*	*	0.1	*	—	—	2.1
20 May	(b)0.6	(b)1.0	*	0.3	*	—	—	*	2.2
19 August	1.3	(b)1.1	*	(b)0.3	*	*	—	—	2.9
18 November—old(c)	1.2	(b)1.0	(b)0.2	0.3	0.2	—	—	—	2.9
—new(d)	*	(b)2.0	*	(b)0.4	(b)0.3	*	—	—	5.4
<i>1984—</i>									
17 February	(b)3.8	(b)3.1	(b)0.6	0.8	(b)0.5	*	—	*	8.9
18 May	(b)3.6	(b)2.9	(b)0.4	0.6	(b)0.4	*	—	—	8.1
<i>Other industries—</i>									
<i>1983—</i>									
18 February	5.0	4.8	1.8	0.6	*	0.3	0.4	0.6	14.9
20 May	6.3	4.3	1.5	(b)0.8	*	(b)0.3	0.3	0.6	15.4
19 August	4.6	4.7	1.3	0.8	*	*	0.3	0.9	13.8
18 November—old(c)	6.6	3.5	1.9	(b)1.0	(b)1.2	(b)0.7	0.3	0.9	16.2
—new(d)	9.0	4.5	3.7	1.8	*	0.8	(b)0.4	1.3	24.7
<i>1984—</i>									
17 February	15.8	(b)7.1	*	(b)2.6	(b)3.3	1.1	0.5	1.2	35.4
18 May	(b)11.1	(b)6.0	(b)3.6	1.9	(b)1.6	0.6	0.5	1.4	26.7
<i>Total—</i>									
<i>1983—</i>									
18 February	5.8	5.8	1.9	0.7	*	0.4	0.4	0.6	16.9
20 May	6.9	5.3	1.7	1.0	*	(b)0.3	0.3	0.6	17.5
19 August	5.9	5.8	1.3	1.1	(b)0.9	(b)0.4	0.3	0.9	16.7
18 November—old(c)	7.8	4.5	2.0	1.3	(b)1.4	(b)0.7	0.3	0.9	19.1
—new(d)	11.2	6.5	4.1	2.1	(b)3.5	0.8	(b)0.5	1.3	30.1
<i>1984—</i>									
17 February	19.6	10.1	(b)4.5	3.4	(b)3.7	1.2	0.5	1.3	44.3
18 May	14.7	8.9	4.0	2.5	(b)2.0	0.6	0.6	1.5	34.8
<i>Standard error(e)</i>	2.7	1.5	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	3.3
JOB VACANCY RATES (per cent)									
<i>1981—</i>									
20 February	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.6	1.1	0.8
15 May	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.4	2.3	0.7	0.8
21 August	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.8	0.5	1.9	0.6	0.8
20 November	1.1	0.7	0.8	(b)0.5	0.8	0.6	1.9	0.9	0.9
<i>1982—</i>									
19 February	0.9	0.8	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.2	0.8
21 May	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.3	(b)0.6	(b)0.4	0.7	1.0	0.6
20 August	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.2	(b)0.5	(b)0.4	1.2	0.8	0.5
19 November	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.2	(b)0.3	(b)0.4	1.0	1.0	0.4
<i>1983—</i>									
18 February	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.2	(b)0.4	(b)0.4	1.2	0.8	0.4
20 May	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.9	0.8	0.5
19 August	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.0	1.2	0.4
18 November—old(c)	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.6	1.0	1.2	0.5
—new(d)	(b)0.7	(b)0.5	(b)0.5	(b)0.5	*	(b)0.7	*	(b)1.3	0.6
<i>1984—</i>									
17 February	(b)1.0	(b)0.8	*	(b)0.8	*	(b)0.9	*	(b)1.2	0.9
18 May	(b)0.8	(b)0.7	(b)0.5	(b)0.6	*	*	(b)1.1	(b)1.4	0.7

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 7 to 9. (b) Relative standard error greater than 20 per cent but less than 30 per cent. See paragraph 13. (c) Result from payroll tax based sample. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (d) Result of sample from ABS register. See paragraphs 2 to 4. (e) Applicable to latest estimates of level and quarterly movement. See paragraphs 10 to 13.

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An Information Paper : New Statistical Series : Employment, Average Weekly Earnings, Job Vacancies and Overtime describes the conceptual and methodological changes associated with the new series. (Copies of this Information Paper were distributed with the release of *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, March Quarter 1984 (Preliminary)* (6301.0) on 21 June 1984; *Job Vacancies, Australia, February 1984* (6231.0) and *Overtime, Australia, February 1984* (6330.0) on June 25 1984.)

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